

Four mountain bike loops are proposed as a part of this project to meet the demand for bike trails. Bike Loop A is designed for younger or less experience riders. It is shorter and located on gentler topography than the other loops. Bike Loops B, C and D are longer, stacked loops. Park staff will work to establish partnerships with area bike clubs to help with the maintenance of any bike trails that are developed.

Since hikers are allowed on all public trails within the park, a hiking-only connector is shown that links the bridle trails with the bike trails. This connector will allow hikers to move through the entire north side trail system but would prevent bikes and horses from mixing for safety and trail stability/design reasons. Bike trails will be designed as single-tract trail.

A small maintenance area to serve the park on the north side of the Cape Fear River will be established to aid park management and eliminate the necessity of long trips to the south side for repairs and supplies. A ranger residence on the north side will also be needed. There may be an opportunity to acquire a suitable existing residence as a part of the land acquisition needed to develop this area. The north side of the park will continue to be used for day-use recreation only.

Proposed South Side Facilities

Figure VIII-2, *Existing South Side Facilities*, shows the park's major facilities on the south side of the Cape Fear River. The trailer now serving as the park office/contact station, an old pump house and the v-groove tin barn adjacent to the superintendent's residence are to be demolished/removed. All of the other existing facilities shown will remain.

Figure VIII-3, *Proposed South Side Facilities*, is the revised development plan for the park's major public use area. It shows the facilities proposed for construction under the *Visitor's Center & Picnic Area Expansion* capital improvement project.

At the entrance, a traffic island is to be installed in the vicinity of the existing park entrance gate in order to visually break up this long, straight segment of the entrance road and to aid in slowing down visitor traffic entering the park. The island may also contain the "Raven Rock State Park" sign. The first choice for the traffic island location is just beyond the current gate location, if enough room exists between the gate and the road to the maintenance area. If there is insufficient room, then the gate and traffic island should be shifted south.

Once the trailer now serving as the park office is removed, the parking at that location can then serve the maintenance area, allowing the existing gravel parking lot near the entrance road to be revegetated. The abandoned park office area should then be allowed to revegetate to provide additional visual screening of the maintenance area from the park road.

Day Use Areas

The park road will be slightly realigned at its current terminus and extended past the existing and proposed day-use areas along a ridge before terminating at the proposed visitor's center. The existing gravel parking lot with approximately 50 spaces will be paved with a center island established and vegetated. A 12-table picnic shelter will be constructed just east of this parking lot in order to provide easy access for picnickers that bring heavy, bulky items such as coolers, cookers, food and drinks for large gatherings. The big grassy field that

Figure VIII-2. Existing South Side Facilities

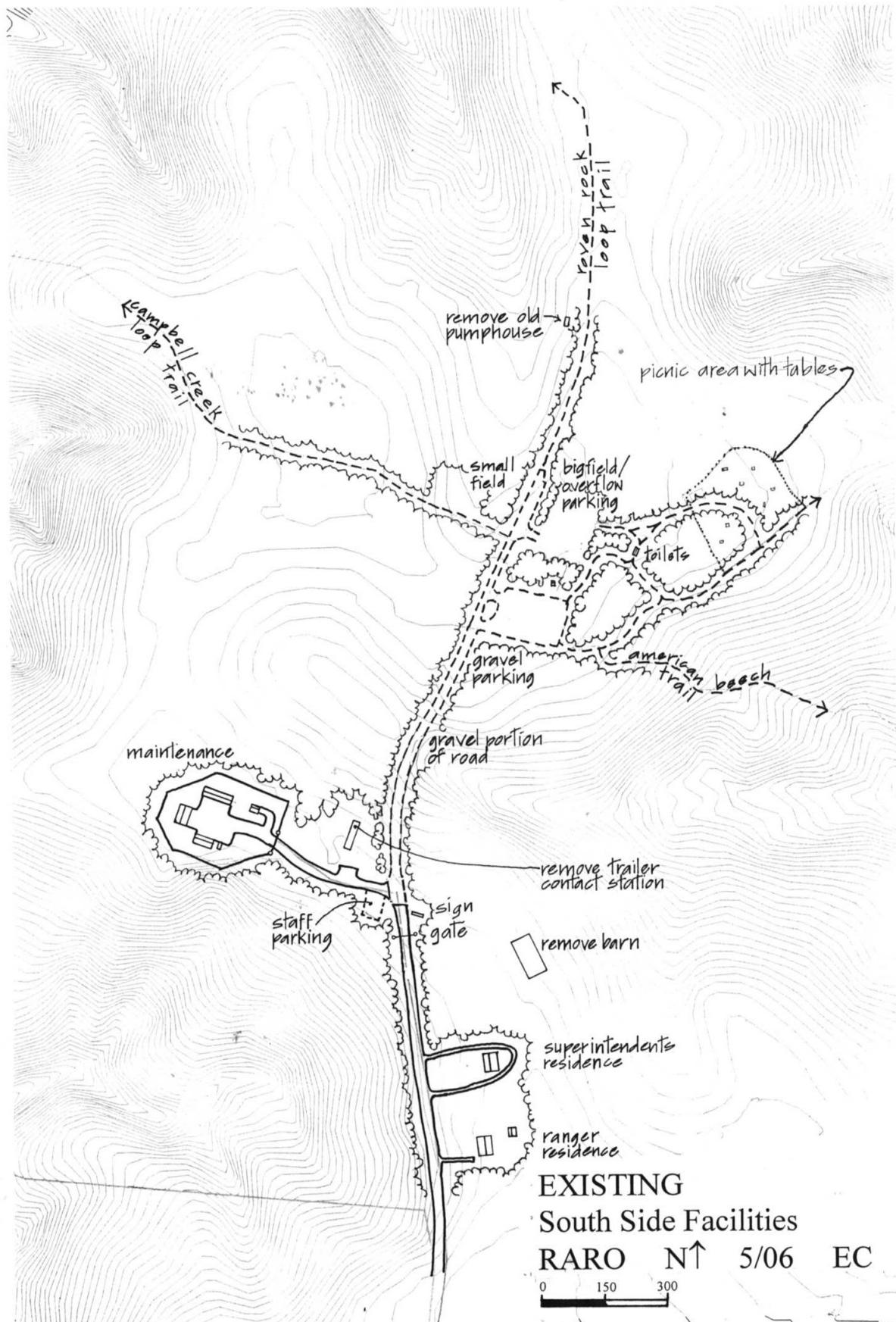
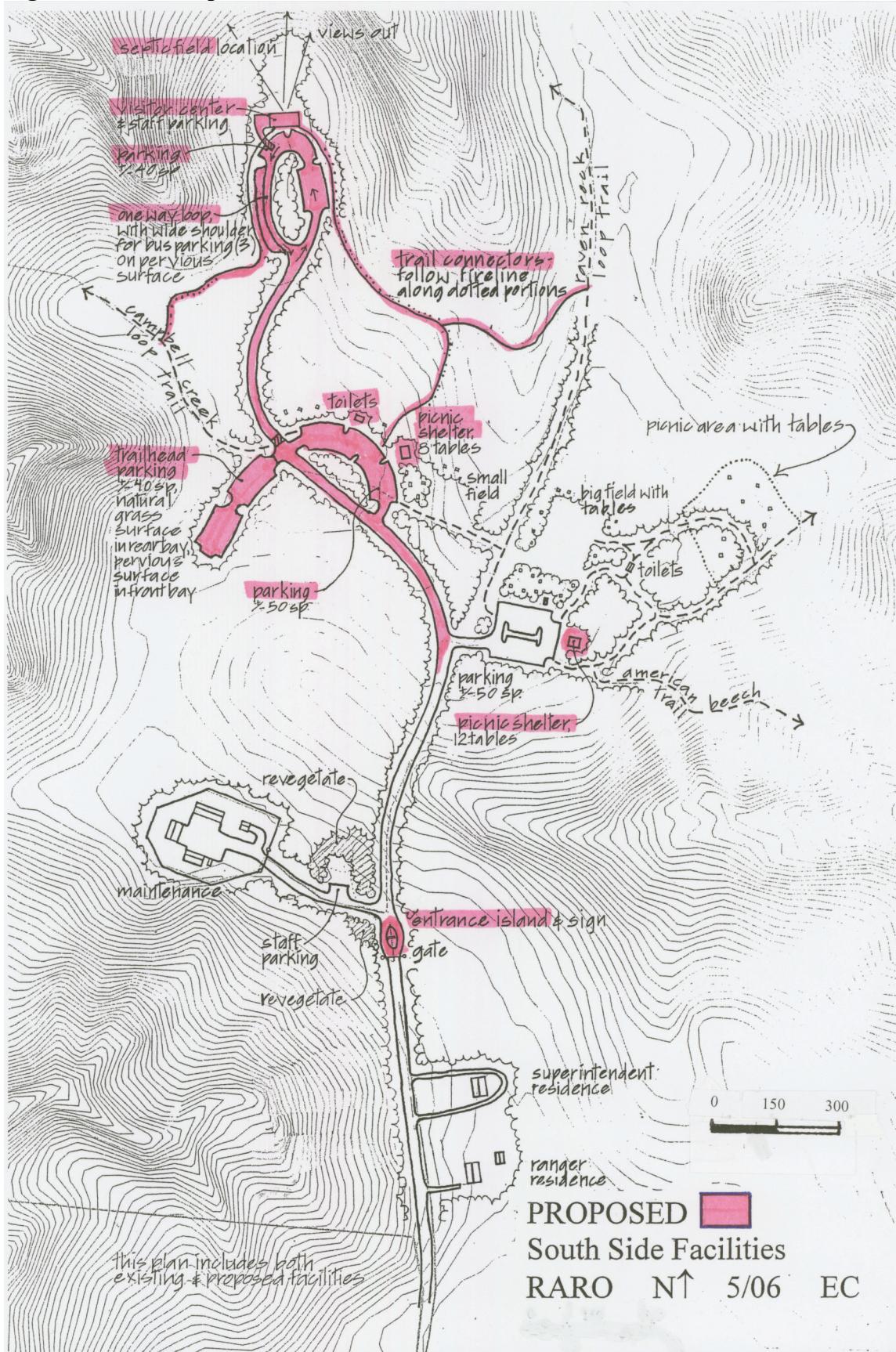


Figure VIII-3. Proposed South Side Facilities



currently serves as overflow parking for busy days will have the wheel stops removed and will be converted to an open area available for recreation. Picnic tables will be added around the big field and in the area between the big field and the parking lot to the south. The existing toilet building will continue to serve this area.

A second picnic area will be constructed that includes a 50-car parking lot, an eight-table shelter, a toilet building and picnic tables. This picnic shelter will be located in close proximity to the parking lot and to the existing small field that will continue to be used for recreation.

Across the road from the second picnic area will be trailhead parking with approximately 40 spaces. The first bay of 20 spaces will be surfaced with permeable grass pavers, and the second bay of 20 spaces will have a natural grass surface. This second bay will serve as an additional open recreation area during times of light visitation but will accommodate overflow parking during special events or heavier visitation. Many repeat park visitors looking to access the Campbell Creek section of the park will likely use the first bay as their main trailhead access.

Visitor's Center

The main park road will terminate at the visitor's center in a one-way loop with approximately 40 angled parking spaces. Staff parking is provided on the west side of the visitor's center. The island in the middle of the one-way loop will retain as much of the existing vegetation that can be protected during the construction process as possible. A widened shoulder is provided on the right-hand side of the one-way loop to accommodate parking for up to three buses. This widened area is to be surfaced with permeable grass pavers.

The site where the visitor's center and associated parking are to be located is an old abandoned field in the early stages of succession. Ideally, all disturbances for this construction would occur within this old field. A fire line runs around the edge of the old field. The septic field and repair area will be located north of and just downhill from the visitor center within the old field. Clearing for the septic field and repair area will open up scenic views from the back of the visitor's center into the mature hardwood forest beyond.

Trails

The Campbell Creek Loop Trail will be slightly rerouted as shown on Figure VIII-3 to accommodate the new facilities. Trail connectors will be added to connect the visitor's center and day use areas with the park's existing trails. The design will allow visitors to enter the park, park their vehicles, and then use the trail system and other park facilities without the need to drive. Portions of the proposed trail connectors between the visitor's center and the Campbell Creek Loop Trail and the Raven Rock Loop Trail follow existing fire lines.

Green Building and L.E.E.D. Opportunities

Construction of the south side facilities offers several green building/leadership in energy and environmental design (LEED) opportunities:

- east/west orientation of the visitor's center for solar gain opportunities;
- water efficient landscaping without need for irrigation;
- landscape plantings composed entirely of locally native plants;
- pedestrian trail connectivity, permitting visitors to enter the park, leave their vehicles, and then access other parts of the park on foot;
- pervious pavement opportunities (grass, gravel, pervious pavers) in areas of low use and overflow parking; and
- no curb and gutter or storm water concentration and sheet flow through vegetated areas for surface runoff.

North Side Trailhead Improvements

The proposed *North Side Bridle Trails Repair* capital improvement project would expand and improve the existing north side trailhead. Figure VIII-4, *Proposed North Side Trailhead*, shows the location and improvements planned for the trailhead. The new layout overlays the existing gravel lot. The majority of the new clearing and grading will occur to the west of the existing lot due to gentler slopes in this area. The new lot will contain approximately 12 car parking spaces and 20 vehicle/trailer spaces of a size adequate to serve the larger vehicles and trailers more commonly in use today. The existing pit privy south of the existing parking lot will be demolished and replaced with a toilet building with flush toilets. An expanded central pipe chase will function as a ranger office, providing the first ranger space on the north side of the park.

The layout provides for one-way traffic through the parking lot and one driveway access on River Road. Vehicles needing to circle back through the parking lot may do so without re-entering River Road. The exact location of the parking lot entrance will be identified in the design phase to assure adequate lines of sight for drivers traveling River Road and for users of the parking lot. If the parking lot entrance shifts, the proposed parking lot layout may also need to be adjusted. Vegetation should be maintained in the center island to help break up the expanse of parking.

Figure VIII-4. Proposed North Side Trailhead

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